



Getting Ahead of the Holiday Meal Cost- Perishables Part 6

It's beginning to feel like the holidays! We've prepared our kitchen and pulled out our favorite recipes (Part 1 hyperlink), stocked our shelves with canned goods (Part # hyperlink), purchased dry ingredients (Part # hyperlink), secured our favorite spices (Part # hyperlink), and filled the freezer (Part # hyperlink), it's now time to purchase the perishable items. Fresh fruits and vegetables are perishable items, and as indicated by their name, do not have a long shelf life. Dairy is also considered perishable. You will want to purchase fresh ingredients close to the time of meal preparation. Carefully select your produce to avoid over ripe or badly bruised items. This will reduce food waste and ensure optimal freshness on your holiday table.

By now you have your menu fully planned and you know exactly what items remain. You've already purchased shelf-stable and frozen food items, now all that remains are the perishable fresh items. Don't forget to check your local Farmer's Market to see what is [in-season](#). Some local farmer's markets offer [Double Bucks](#) on their produce allowing you to save more SNAP dollars. Purchasing at your local Farmer's Market also supports local Farmer's in your area! Check out [North Carolina Farm Fresh directory](#) to locate your county market.



If you're unable to purchase at the Farmer's Market, you can still utilize SNAP benefits at a local grocery store.

Some of the most popular perishable items include:

- Dairy products (milk, cheese, etc)
- Fresh Breads
- Fresh Fruits
- Fresh Herbs
- Fresh Pastries
- Fresh Vegetables
- Meat (that you don't plan to freeze)

Preparing now, saves headache and money later. Try not to get caught in the holiday grocery shopping rush! Happy Holidays!

The Getting Ahead of Holiday Meal Cost series is sponsored by the *More In My Basket (MIMB)* Program. Visit morefood.org for the complete series or to contact the *More In My Basket* staff.